

Sunday, November 22, 2020

Christ the King, Year A

Introduction

On this final Sunday of the church year our gospel is Jesus' great story of judgment. In the end, the faithful are those who served Christ by ministering to those who are poor, hungry, naked, sick, or estranged. We gather this day to celebrate the reign of Christ and his victory over death, yet we await the consummation of all things yet to come. Acknowledging Christ as our merciful ruler, we go forth that his reign may be known in our loving words and deeds.

Confession and Forgiveness

All may make the sign of the cross, the sign marked at baptism, as the presiding minister begins.

Blessed be the holy Trinity, ✝ one God,
in whose image we are made,
who claims us and calls us beloved.

Amen.

Silence is kept for reflection.

Holy One,
we confess that we are not awake for you.
We are not faithful in using your gifts.
We forget the least of our brothers and sisters.
We do not see your beautiful image in one another.
We are infected by sin
that divides your beloved community.
Open our hearts to your coming,
open our eyes to see you in our neighbor,
open our hands to serve your creation. Amen.

Beloved, we are God's children now,
and Jesus opens the door to us.

Through ✝ Jesus you are forgiven,
by Jesus you are welcome,
in Jesus you are called to rejoice!

Let us live in the promises prepared for us
from the foundation of the world.

Amen.

Prayer of the Day

O God of power and might, your Son shows us the way of service, and in him we inherit the riches of your grace. Give us the wisdom to know what is right and the strength to

serve the world you have made, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Amen.

Readings and Psalm (it will be either the psalm or Ephesians, not both)

Psalm 95:1-7a

We are the people of God's pasture and the sheep of God's hand. (Ps. 95:7)

Matthew 25:31-46

The coming of the Son of Man; the separation of sheep and goats

Psalm: Psalm 95:1-7a

We are the people of God's pasture and the sheep of God's hand. (Ps. 95:7)

¹Come, let us sing to the LORD;

let us shout for joy to the rock of our salvation.

²Let us come before God's presence with thanksgiving
and raise a loud shout to the LORD with psalms.

³For you, LORD, are a great God,
and a great ruler above all gods.

⁴In your hand are the caverns of the earth;
the heights of the hills are also yours.

⁵The sea is yours, for you made it,
and your hands have molded the dry land.

⁶Come, let us worship and bow down,
let us kneel before the LORD our maker.

^{7a}For the LORD is our God,
and we are the people of God's pasture
and the sheep of God's hand.

A The Word of the Lord.

C **THANKS BE TO GOD.**

Temple Talk: *Stewardship (title will change)* Ken Seiler

Gospel: Matthew 25:31-46

Jesus compares himself to a king who moves among his subjects to see how he is treated: what is done for the least of those who belong to his family is truly done for him.

[Jesus said to the disciples:] ³¹“When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, then he will sit on the throne of his glory. ³²All the nations will be gathered before him, and he will separate people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats, ³³and he will put the sheep at his right hand and the goats at the left. ³⁴Then the king will say to those at his right hand, ‘Come, you that are

blessed by my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world; ³⁵for I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, ³⁶I was naked and you gave me clothing, I was sick and you took care of me, I was in prison and you visited me.’ ³⁷Then the righteous will answer him, ‘Lord, when was it that we saw you hungry and gave you food, or thirsty and gave you something to drink? ³⁸And when was it that we saw you a stranger and welcomed you, or naked and gave you clothing? ³⁹And when was it that we saw you sick or in prison and visited you?’ ⁴⁰And the king will answer them, ‘Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family you did it to me.’ ⁴¹Then he will say to those at his left hand, ‘You that are accursed, depart from me into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels; ⁴²for I was hungry and you gave me no food, I was thirsty and you gave me nothing to drink, ⁴³I was a stranger and you did not welcome me, naked and you did not give me clothing, sick and in prison and you did not visit me.’ ⁴⁴Then they also will answer, ‘Lord, when was it that we saw you hungry or thirsty or a stranger or naked or sick or in prison, and did not take care of you?’ ⁴⁵Then he will answer them, ‘Truly I tell you, just as you did not do it to one of the least of these, you did not do it to me.’ ⁴⁶And these will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life.”

Prayers of Intercession

When I say, “Hear us, O God,” you respond, **“Your mercy is great.”**

Longing for Christ’s reign to come among us, we pray for the outpouring of God’s power on the church, the world, and all in need.

A brief silence is held as we gather our prayers.

Lord of all, train our ears to hear your cry in the needs of those around us. Bless the efforts of the church to feed and clothe, reach and serve others, as you, O Lord, have served us.

Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

You cause rain to fall on the just and unjust alike. Direct our use of creation to provide for the needs of all people in ways that are sustainable for the earth.

Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Bring peace to every place where conflict rages.

Grant opportunities for ending divisions among us and usher in your reign of unity and reconciliation.

Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Heal the sinful divisions we erect between us and release us from prejudice. Restore our capacity to see your image in people near and far, that we might not strip away dignity that you have given.

Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Pour out the gifts of your Spirit on children and youth throughout the church. Sustain those who work in children's ministry, youth ministry, and campus ministry as they nurture the gifts of young people.

Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Here other intercessions may be offered.

Thank you for saints now departed who fed the hungry, clothed the naked, and tended to the sick. Inspire us by their example, that we may see your presence in those in need around us.

Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Receive our prayers in the name of Jesus Christ our Savior, until that day when you gather all creation around your throne where you will reign forever and ever.

Amen.

Offering Prayer

God of all goodness,
generations have turned to you,
gathered around your table,
and shared your abundant blessings.
Number us among them
that, as we gather these gifts from your abundance,
and give thanks for your rich blessings,
we may feast upon your very self
and care for all that you have made,
through Jesus Christ, our Lord and Servant.

Amen.

Invitation to Communion

There is a place for you at the banquet.
Come and feast at Jesus' table.

Prayer after Communion

Lord Jesus,
in this simple meal you have set a banquet.
Sustain us on the journey,
strengthen us to care for the least of your beloved children,

and give us glad and generous hearts
as we meet you on the way.

Amen.

Blessing

May the God of all creation,
in whose image we are made,
who claims us and calls us beloved,
who strengthens us for service,
give you reason to rejoice and be glad!
The blessing of God,
Sovereign, ✝ Savior, and Spirit,
be with you today and always.

Amen.

Dismissal

Beloved of God,
go in peace to love and serve the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

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Prayers adapted by Interim Pastor Janet S. Peterman

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